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In addition to these dwellings only a few houses have separate buildings, such as, for example, one or, if need be, two storehouses or a small house (yatléckwe) in which friends and neighbors sleep when they help the owner for days for the joint work of expressing sugar cane or for the harvest. In the storehouse (kotyavyat: literally "maize storehouse") only maize and beans are stored, not wheat or garden produce. Fruit, yuca, potatoes, and arracacha are not kept on hand or stored at all, but always merely fetched as needed and eaten immediately. Wheat is tied in bundles below the ears on stalks about 20 centimeters long and hung up under the roof above the fire. Maize and beans may be kept up to two years in the storehouse. For this purpose horizontal cross-sticks are fastened in it, over which the ears are hung, and racks consisting of maize stalks laid close together are constructed for the beans. These racks, too, are hung up, if possible, or at least are fastened quite high above the floor so that the mice (únsa) cannot get to them. In addition, a cat (míř) is shut up in the storehouse, if one is available. Stalls for the livestock are unknown.

In the middle of the village of Calderas, on community land, stand the church (iglésia), the community house (kabildeyát), and the six festival houses of the six largest families (Ill. 147 /see p. 264 /). In their construction, they are likewise hip-roofed houses, but their walls are built in the manner of the colonists' houses, /117/ out of vertical posts, on the inside and outside of which bamboo poles or straight branches are tied horizontally. To strengthen the posts the interstices are filled with earth, clay, and, in the lower part, also with stones. The filling is spread smoothly and the wall whitewashed inside and out. Whereas light enters the other houses through the door and the not very tightly sealed walls made of maize stalks placed side by side, light can enter the above-mentioned houses consisting of solid walls only through the relatively small door and the opening of the roof ridge, which makes the interior rather dark.

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796 Throughout all these actions, the music has not failed to
[533] sound. /211/ the ensemble of the albacero alternating with that of the fiestero. The tunes are joyous, the enthusiasm grows, and the bursts of firecrackers are frequent.

When everything has been consumed, the plates, kerchiefs, and pots are returned with mutual expressions of deep appreciation. The albacero invites the fiestero:

--"My brother: now let us go to my house. I have nothing to offer you, but what can we do."

--"Do not worry. I, too, am in the same situation as you."

They all remain in the house of the albacero until the ringing of the bells announces the hour of prayer. Very few attend, but the fiestero and albacero have an obligation to do so. The musicians go behind. The albacero sets in place the lamp which he exhibited at the greeting two hours earlier.

796 The lighting of the church is adequate. There are some
346 72 candles, of which those on the altar are from the fiestero
373 and the remainder from the albacero. There are four hanging lamps of the type already described. On cross-pieces supported by vertical beams and placed so that one is close to the altar and another at the exit door, numerous candles are held in fresh clay, in the same manner as in the cornices of the walls.

796 The religious performances are accompanied by native
533 music; monorhythmic and sad tunes alternate with joyous airs.

XIX

Torches and Vacaloca

796 While at the house of the fiestero the men kill the beef
532 and make up the bundles of firewood and the women roast the maize cakes, in the house of the albacero the chirimía plays, chicha is drunk from gourd containers, the lamp is made, and

/328 cont./

389 began to use other types of raw materials. The death blow was
43 thus given to the only home industry of the above-mentioned
regions. Wax is still gathered, but the price for an arroba in
Silvia does not reach eight pesos. There is no longer any profit.

388 The Indians go on using it to make candles for household con-
● [373] sumption and above all for illumination at religious fiestas. We
[796] have described the methods of gathering, extracting, and manu-
facturing laurel wax in the work entitled "La Fiesta de San Juan
en Calderas, Tierradentro /The Fiesta of San Juan in Calderas,
Tierradentro/," published in the Revista Colombiana de Folklore,
Number 2 of 1953.

/329/

Mingas

476 The minga is the most widespread form of labor among the
461 Páez. The natives can work for themselves alone and are ex-
cellent laborers. But the task would demand more of their time
[464] and effort. Thus, the minga serves to prevent "boredom" during
the work, to gain time, and to provide a labor force which would
otherwise be hard to obtain.

476 The minga then is a co-operative system of labor whereby
the interested party invites a specific number of acquaintances to
perform a job, duly rewarding them with food, drink, and coca.
"Communal work for any particular individual is truly loaned
labor, with obligatory recompense," says Hernández de Alba
/cited in English/.

476 Indispensable articles of reward are meat, chicha, and, in
554 nearly all the parcialidades, coca. The incidence of the mingas
is thus almost in direct proportion to the possession of domestic
[231] animals. Those who lack such stock, that is to say, the poor
according to the concepts of Páez culture, work alone or in the
company of their sons, if they have any.

476 In the course of the cultivation cycle the following mingas
241 are held: to fell the trees (clearings); to pile up the wood that
remains after the burning and to cut stakes for the fence; to
build fences; to do the planting and weeding.

In Calderas a minga for clearing is carried out in the
following way: